

REMARKS:

In the foregoing amendments, claims 1, 2, 4 and 11 were amended to correct typographical errors. These amendments were made to clarify what was already implied in applicant's claims, and these amendments are not narrowing amendments and are not being made for reasons substantially related to patentability presented.

Claims 1-15 were examined. No claims were withdrawn from consideration by the examiner. Claims 1-10, 13 and 14 were rejected over prior art. Claims 11 and 12 were not rejected over prior art. The Official action indicated that claims 11 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome any objection/rejection thereto and to include the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Official action objected to the drawings because the plates set forth in claim 4 are not shown therein. In the foregoing amendments, the expression "plates" in claim 4 was changed to "part." Since the structure now set forth in claim 4 corresponds to that shown in, for example, figure 24 of the present application, applicant respectfully request that the examiner reconsider and withdraw the objection to the drawings, as set forth in the outstanding Office action.

Claim 11 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being vague and indefinite on pages 3 and 4 of the Official action. In the foregoing amendments, claim 11 was amended to define that the first ends of the first belt and the second belt are adjustable with respect to the first band, and the second ends of the first belt and the second belt are not adjustable with respect to the second side of the base plate. Applicant respectfully submits that claim 11 particularly points out and distinctly claims the

invention within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the examiner reconsider and withdraw this rejection.

Claims 1-3, 6-9, 13 and 14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U. S. patent No. 6,679,516 of Andrevon. This rejection is set forth on pages 4 and 5 of the Official action. Claims 4, 5 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Andrevon. This rejection is set forth on pages 5 and 6 of the Official action. Claim 15 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Andrevon in view of U. S. patent No. 6,076,848 of Rigal *et al.* (Rigal).

Applicant respectfully submits that the patent to Andrevon is not available as a reference against the present claims within the meanings of 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The patent to Andrevon is based on an application filed January 24, 2002. This filing date is after the priority date of June 14, 2001, for Japanese 2001-179623, from which the present application claims priority. The present application is a continuation-in-part (CIP) of U.S. serial No. 10/167,615, filed June 13, 2002, now U.S. patent No. 6,974,149. In the present application, figures 33A-36B were added together with a corresponding description in applicant's specification. Applicant respectfully submits that the original text in the parent application, which includes figures 24 and 25, provides support within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, for claims 1-15 as presented in this application. Applicant is attaching hereto a verified English translation of Japanese 2001-179623, filed June 14, 2001, for the examiner's review. Applicant respectfully submits that the attached English translation supports claims 1-15 within the meaning of 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph.

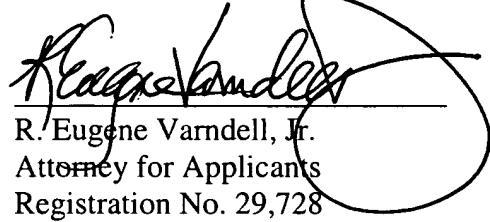
For all the foregoing reasons, applicant respectfully submits that Andrevon is not a reference against present claims 1-15 within the meanings of 35 U.S.C. §102(e) and 35 U.S.C. §103(a). Therefore, applicant respectfully requests that the examiner reconsider and withdraw all the rejections set forth in the outstanding Office action that include the teachings of Andrevon.

In summary, the teachings of Andrevon are not available as a reference against applicant's claims. The teachings of Rigal do not replace the missing teachings of Andrevon and do not cure or rectify the deficiencies in the teachings of Andrevon. For such reasons, a formal allowance of claims 1-10 and 13-15, together with allowable claims 11 and 12, is respectfully requested.

While it is believed that all the claims in this application are in condition for allowance, should the examiner have any comments or questions, it is respectfully requested that the undersigned be telephoned at the below listed number to resolve any outstanding issues.

In the event this paper is not timely filed, applicant hereby petitions for an appropriate extension of time. The fee therefor, as well as any other fees which become due, may be charged to our deposit account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,  
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Attachment:

English translation of Japanese 2001-179623, filed June 14, 2001, and a verification therefor.